29th January 1929]

(b) whether Government will be pleased to place on the table the latest report on the working of the said Irrigation panchayats?

A.—(a) Twenty-four channels were under panchayat management in the Godavari Western delta in 1927–28. For the names of the channels, the attention of the hon. Member is invited to the Collector's report laid on the table in reply to clause (b).

(b) The latest report [a], i.e., the one for 1927–28, is laid on the table.

Withdrawal of the powers of Irrigation panchayats regarding distribution of water, etc.

*1144 Q.—Mr. D. NARAYANA RAJU: Will the hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state—

(a) whether it is a fact that the Irrigation panchayats when they were first constituted in 1921, were given full powers to regulate distribution of water let into the channels under their management, and were authorized to permit breaches and to shift the positions or alter the diameters of pipes as might be found necessary;

(b) whether Government are aware that, by reason of these wide powers of distributing water, the Irrigation panchayats were able to discharge their duties to the entire satisfaction of the ryots concerned;

(c) whether it is a fact that the panchayats have been recently deprived of their control over distribution, the Tahsildar, Bhimavaram, having in his F. Dis. No. 1187-Sup. of 1927 informed the panchayats that they should not permit breaches or in any way meddle with the pipes;

(d) if the answers to (a) and (c) be in the affirmative, what the reasons are for this change of policy; and

(e) whether Government have received any report that the Public Works Department and the Revenue Department subordinates are not favourably disposed towards the panchayat management of Irrigation channels?

A.—(a) The panchayats were constituted in 1917. Their powers were not well defined and in some cases they doubtless dealt with the channels in the manner suggested in the question.

(b) On the contrary cases of mismanagement and unsatisfactory distribution on the one hand and of unwillingness on the part of the panchayats to continue to work on the other were reported.

(c) The Government are unaware of the order of the Tahsildar, Bhimavaram. In 1926 and 1928 the Government issued certain conditions subject to which channels might be handed over to the management of panchayats. These conditions [b] are laid on the table.

(d) It has been found by actual experience that to allow ryots to breach the bunds, shift the positions of pipes and alter their diameters is a mistake and when codifying a definite set of conditions under which channels might be handed over to panchayat management the Government provided against damage to pipes, sluices, bunds, etc.

(e) No.

---

[a] Printed as Appendix XIII on pages 309–311 infra.

[b] Printed as Appendix XIV on pages 311–313 infra.